# THE NATION'S BLESSING

— IN —

# TRIAL:

A SERMON PREACHED IN THE

## South Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn,

BY THE PASTOR

REV. SAMUEL T. SPEAR, D. D.

NOVEMBER 27TH, 1862.

BROOKLYN:
WM. W. ROSE, BOOKSELLER AND PRINTER,
142 ATLANTIC STREET.

1862.

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# THE NATION'S BLESSING IN TRIAL.

"O, COME, LET US SING UNTO THE LORD: LET US MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE TO THE ROCK OF OUR SALVATION. LET US COME BEFORE HIS PRESENCE WITH THANKSGIVING, AND MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO HIM WITH PSALMS."—Ps. 95 : : 1—2.

In many respects the present is a dark and gloomy hour. As a people, we are in the midst of a terrible civil war, waged between those who but yesterday were members of the same political family. In the number of combatants, in the territory over which it extends, in the skill and energy applied to its prosecution, in the loss of human life, in the causes which have produced it, and in the questions which hang upon it for their solution, this war is one of the most extraordinary military struggles, to be found in the history of man. At such a time, it would seem specially appropriate to come before God with fasting, humiliation, and prayer, that a gracious Providence might interpose and arrest the deadly contest: and yet the appointment by which we are convened, has recommended us to observe this day in thanksgiving and praise. If we have had trials and sorrows, we have also had mercies. The *common* mercies of Providence we have all enjoyed. Trusting that we shall not forget to thank God for our daily comforts, our family blessings, our spiritual privileges, and heavenly hopes, I propose to inquire whether we may not as citizens, patriots, philanthropists, and Christians, see the good hand of the Lord in the very *trials*, which constitute our national affliction. I ask you to reflect,—

FIRST, UPON THE POLITICAL AND MORAL CHARACTER OF OUR CAUSE. —The Government has drawn the sword to defend the life of the nation against the most atrocious rebellion the world ever saw. It is contending with anarchists and traitors. Its foes are traitors. Treason, on their part, and devotion to the Constitution and the Government erected under it, on ours, form the political

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and moral contrasts of this great struggle. Traitors claim the right to dismember this nation at their pleasure, to secede from it, and erect another within its territorial limits. To repel and utterly blast this attempt to introduce the infamous doctrines of free love and divorce into the code of nations, is the righteous object for which the Government has taken up arms in its own defense. There is hence a great political and moral principle at stake in this contest: and to cry *peace*, without any regard to this principle, is either a weakness of feeling, or the very next thing to treason itself. To surrender to an armed rebellion without an effort to crush it, would be a delinquency, alike condemned by the laws of God and the reason of man. Peace on such terms is not desirable. I do not rejoice in the necessity of fighting: but the necessity being upon us, then I do bless God, that we can appeal to our own consciences, to the moral sense of mankind, and to the Searcher of all hearts, in respect to the *equity* of the principle for which we contend. I believe in the righteousness of our cause, and also in the duty of doing our utmost to maintain it, as truly as I believe in the existence of God. Morally considered, we are not at liberty to be *indifferent*. We are bound before God as well as man, to be heartily loyal. Complicity with treason in such a struggle, is sin.

Special force is given to these thoughts when we remember, that the Government of these United States is not despotic and oppressive, but built on the broad foundation of Human Rights. I know that the institution of slavery exists within its bosom, that it did so exist when the Union was formed, and that the Fathers who adopted the Constitution, did incidentally recognize it as a local institution of the States, providing for the rendition of fugitive slaves, and also granting an increased representation to the Slave States in the lower House of Congress on account of their slave population. I know also that the Southern people, especially within the last thirty years, pleading what they call their constitutional rights on this subject, have become exceedingly extravagant and unreasonable in their claims upon the general Government, and that for the most part they have succeeded in these claims, largely controlling the national administration, and making or unmaking compromises very much at their own dis-

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cretion. Looking at a very large class of facts as they lie in our past history, one might almost suppose that this Government was created to be the guardian-angel of the extension and perpetuity of slavery. That it has been sadly perverted to these ends, is an unquestionable fact.

And yet the Revolutionary Fathers had in view no such result, and meant no such thing. The slavery then existing they deplored and condemned as a social, political, and moral evil, which, as they believed, would soon pass away, and leave liberty regulated by just and equal laws, as the blessing and inheritance of all the people. Such men as Madison, John Jay, Dr. Franklin, Jefferson, John Adams, Washington, indeed most of the public men of the Revolutionary age, very freely expressed their hatred of slavery, and advocated its early abolition. It is true, that yielding to the necessities of the hour, and desiring to secure the co-operation of all the States in the formation of the Union, they made compromises with this institution; and it is just as true, that they honestly supposed, that in a few years the system would disappear by a process of natural decay. Hence Madison was not willing to have the word *slave* inserted in the Constitution, to disgrace that noble charter of human liberty with the chattel-doctrine of property in man. The ordinance of 1787, prohibiting slavery in the North Western Territory, gave expression to the same idea and the same feeling. The spirit and purpose of our ancestors are among the most obvious facts of history. One great object of their labors, as they expressly said, was to "secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity"—that liberty which recognizes as a fundamental idea, the fact "that all men are created equal," "endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights," among which "are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

"The true and real life of a nation is the political *idea*" or *ideas* "upon which it is based. The ideas of our government are *Liberty* and *Unity*:"—Liberty, as the gift of God to the individual man, subject in civil society to those legal directions and restraints which are necessary to guard it against injury and abuse:—Unity, cementing and binding together all the people as one grand organism of social and political life. To realize these ideas

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in a practical form, the Constitution creates a nation by the self-directed action of the people, whose legally expressed will is the supreme law of the land. It provides the several departments of Government, making them directly or indirectly dependent upon the people, thus giving free scope to the principle of popular representation. It invests the national will with the prerogatives of sovereignty, so limiting and qualifying what are called State Rights as to preserve the nationality of the whole people, considered as one, and but one political society existing under a common Government. Too much cannot be said in praise of this Constitution. It has fewer faults and more excellences than any other instrument of the kind ever made by man. The Union under it has been prolific of countless benefits. The modern pretense of Southern politicians, that it has proved a system of aggression upon Southern rights, is utterly false. True, the Free States have advanced much more rapidly than the Slave States, outgrowing them in population and wealth: but this is the natural and necessary consequence of the difference between the two forms of society. All the New England States put together, are but a trifle larger than the single State of Virginia: the latter was first in the time of settlement: her climate is most inviting, and her natural elements of wealth, almost boundless: her position too is central: yet on account of her free institutions, New England has left Virginia very far in the rear, wedded to her system of slavery and its curses, proving by the laws of political economy, that while righteousness exalteth a nation, sin is always a reproach to any people.

If then we must fight for our Constitution, I thank God that we are fighting on the side of *liberty*. This great nation infamously attacked by a most wanton treason, is striving not only to preserve its flag and its unity, but also to preserve the interests of liberty and justice. We are solving not only for ourselves, but also for the world, through all coming time, the problem of representative self-government And whether we consider the principle of nationality, or the qualities of that nationality providentially committed to our keeping, we should be an ignoble people, unworthy of our inheritance, and unfaithful to duty, if we consented to the demands of this outrageous treason. Those who

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want peace upon any terms, and even pray God to give us peace without reference to the principles involved in a just peace, or who would be willing to settle this controversy by a miserable compromise, that would simply transfer the difficulty to a future age, seem to me very deficient in their views of the crisis. I want no such peace, and no such compromise. I am satisfied with the Constitution *as it is*. It is the charter of liberty, and not of despotism: as the bond of Union, it is the central orb of our political system; and I go for maintaining it at whatever cost. If this orb ot day sink into darkness, especially to give place to a most unrighteous despotism, I know not where, or when freedom can ever again safely build her altars. As it seems to me, the last hope of free institutions would perish from the world, if we fail in this struggle. I dread war, but I dread this more.

I NAME, SECONDLY, OUR NATIONAL PRESERVATION AND SUCCESS THUS FAR IN THIS CONTEST.—We still have a country and a Government. We are not yet dead. I very much doubt whether there is a monarchy in Europe, that could survive such a rebellion for three months.

In the commencement, all the advantages were on the side of the insurgents. For years they had been preparing for this struggle, while the Northern people dreaming of no such crisis, were folding their arms in quiet security. Look carefully at the facts:—see the late President as imbecile as a little child, surrounded by a Cabinet, at least half of whom were traitors and perjured villians, plotting to destroy the very Government they were sworn to support:—look into the National Congress swarming with traitors, belching out the angry fires of treason, without fear or restraint—: see how traitors had plundered the national treasury, scattered the navy to the four quarters of the globe, organized and even drilled many of their regiments, and distributed the public arms in the Southern States:—witness the Generals and under-officers of Government marching by scores into the ranks of treason:—see the almost total want of an army to be at once called into the public service:—see the wide extent of this foul conspiracy, reaching all through the Slave States, and patronized by the officers of State Government:—study well too the strange attitude of the Northern mind, just passing out of a

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severe political strife with all the heart-burnings incident to such a contest, the vanquished charging the fault upon the victors, a portion of the secular press actually shouting in triumph over the secession of States, not a few people sympathizing with this wickedness, patriots and honest men standing aghast, for the moment paralyzed, hoping and fearing, looking around for compromises, not at all perceiving the tremendous magnitude of the scene before them, and having no great leader like a Webster, a Jackson, or a Clay, with grasp of thought and words of fire to move the public heart:—I say, look at these facts as they rolled along in rapid succession; and really it would seem as if all were lost, and the knell of our nationality sounding. Tell me what Government on earth but this, under like disadvantages, could have escaped a total wreck. It is a marvel of Providence that we were saved at all.

And how were we saved at this critical moment? Not by the Peace Congress that met in Washington: not by the speeches of our representatives and senators in Congress: not by the mediation of the Border States: but by the wonderful providence of God, in some respects holding back the rebels and delaying their plans, and in others, so guiding our President in the early stages of his administration that when the moment came for him to sound the note of alarm, twenty millions of people, receiving into their bosoms one of those sudden and mighty regenerations of public feeling that does the work of centuries in a day, awoke from their lethargy, and sprang to the rescue, as if by the call of God. The people burning with a righteous indignation, felt the providential inspiration of the hour, and under God saved the country. God's providence so ordered events, that loyal and patriotic hearts were moved in season. He taught us at the moment, as he has been since teaching us, that the work before us demands the very best qualities of the man, and the truest steel of the genuine patriot. Let God be praised that the country and the Constitution were not lost in the very outset of the struggle. We were just saved from a violent revolution. The South calculating upon a *divided* North, expected great aid from this source; and at one time it seemed more than possible that we might have civil war on Northern soil.

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Delivering us from this our earliest and greatest danger, Providence has smiled upon our efforts to a far greater extent than perhaps we appreciate. If we complain that *more* has not been done, it may be well to see what has been done. We certainly have retained Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, and Western Virginia, all of which would have been swept into this whirlpool of secession but for the presence and activity of the Federal forces, thereby greatly increasing the difficulties of our position. We have maintained along a sea-coast of several thousand miles, a very effective blockade, as proven by its consequences upon the manufacturing interests of Europe. We have made vast military preparations for the public defense by both land and sea. We have paid the entire expenditure without borrowing a single dollar from any foreign country. It is true, that the rebels have also increased their forces; yet in doing this they have about exhausted their fighting population; they cannot bring many more men into the field, having already done their very *best;* whereas the loyal States, having for a time *played* the game of war in the hope of avoiding its greatest severity, are now prepared to sweep down upon them with fleets and armies that must be irresistible. No nation of ancient or modern times ever presented such a tremendous array of force, as that which is now at the disposal of the Government. Nothing but the most astounding inactivity and mismanagement, can prevent its success. We now understand the foe. We now see what we have to do, and are amply prepared to do it.

Moreover, in respect to the question of actual victories, the advantage has been decidedly on the side of the Government. True, we failed at Bull Run, and before Richmond, and recently in the neighborhood of Washington; but we did not fail at Hatteras Inlet, at Port Royal, at Roanoke Island, at Newbern, at Fort Macon, at Fort Pulaski, at Fort Henry, at Fort Donelson, at Somerset, at Shiloh, at Corinth, at Pea Ridge, at Memphis, at New Madrid, at Island No. Ten, at Norfolk, at New Orleans, and more recently in Maryland. We have gained more victories than we have lost, three to one. We have captured and paroled more prisoners of war than the rebels. We have taken from them a large number of important positions, which they had

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gained, not by fighting, but by treason; and no position of any consequence, once recovered from them, is now in their hands. They now occupy very much less territory than they did in the outset. While they have not been able to carry the war into the loyal States, we have possession of very important points in every disloyal State. The Mississippi River, with the exception of a single point, is in our hands; and soon the whole of it will be. The rebels can show no such record of facts. Richmond, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, and Vicksburgh, are their only remaining strongholds; and these we shall capture in due season. Our great lack hitherto has not been a want of men or means, but a want of energy in using them; and while I am not disposed to be either a croaker or a fault-finder, I am more than willing that the Government should be instructed by its own failures. The President has doubtless by this time learnt, what we have all equally learnt, that a *war*-policy is the only policy that can save the nation.

Looking at these facts, I suggest that as patriots and Christians, we have ample occasion to thank God for the favors of his good providence thus far, and take courage for the future. Though not at the end of the war, we have gained much. We are not by any means, as some seem to think, where we were a year ago. Believing our cause to be just, we have appealed to the God of providence; we have besought him to make our cause his care; we have prayed for the President, for his Cabinet, for the National Congress, for the Generals and the soldiers; and I submit that what has been done through these agencies, even if not all that could have been done, is quite sufficient to make us a grateful people. If there are dark sides to the past and the present, there are also bright sides; and while we may not overlook the former, we should be very careful not to forget the latter.

I MENTION, THIRDLY, THE GENERAL CHASTISEMENT OF THIS WAR AS WELL AS THE DISCIPLINE OF OUR DEFEATS AND DELAYS.—Sometimes, as with the individual, so with the nation, the very best lessons of life are taught, and the highest virtues cultivated, in the midst of the severest adversity. Prosperity often generates vices which nothing but adversity can cure. When God's judgments are abroad in the land, the people have a signal opportu-

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nity to learn righteousness. The immutable problems of morality and right then make their appearance, and often enter as facts into the bosom of history.

The Pulpit and the Religious Press have descanted at large upon the sins of the American people, as sustaining a *moral* connection with the evils which we now suffer. This is just and proper. It is not mere cant to say, that this war is the rod of God for the punishment and correction of a guilty people. We have sinned in various ways, and for all our sins deserve the divine displeasure; and yet I cannot conceal from myself, or without the grossest hypocrisy attempt to conceal from you, the fact that the sin of human bondage is palpably and unmistakably the great evil, which as a cause, underlies this war. How any one can fail to see this, is to me a marvel. A man can say, that slavery has nothing to do with this war; and so he can say that the sun does not shine when millions of eyes attest the fact. For what was it that the South threatened to secede in the event of Mr. Lincoln's election? Slavery. For what did they make the same threat at the time the Missouri Compromise was adopted? Slavery. What has been the subject of their persistent agitation for the last forty years? Slavery. What has been the great point of conflict between the North and the South during the whole history of the Government? Slavery. For what have compromises been made? Slavery. To what did Mr. Crittenden's proposed compromise refer? Slavery. What was the subject which the Peace Congrees met to consider and adjust? Slavery. What was the matter of constant debate in both Houses of Congress during the winter of 1860 and '61? Slavery. What was the ground upon which the State Conventions based their acts of secession? Slavery. What is the main point of difference between the Constitution of the United States and that of the so-called Confederate States? Slavery. What was the reason with which the Southern heart was fired, and the people precipitated into this rebellion? Slavery. Who are the aiders and abettors of this rebellion? Slaveholders. Who started it? Slaveholders. Whence came it? From the land of Slavery. It is astonishing, that any one, with such a cloud of facts before him, all pointing in one direction, can fail to see the *cause*, the great and overruling

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cause, of this wicked rebellion. Southern politicians, leaders, and conspirators, with slavery as the basis of action, were determined to rule the nation, or break up the Union, and when the election of Mr. Lincoln indicated that they could not, as hitherto, rule, then they resorted to secession. Neither the Abolitionists, nor the Republican Party, nor any body else but themselves, can be justly held responsible for this work of death. It is *their* work, self-prompted, and without any sufficient occasion, except in the desire to perpetuate and extend the institution of slavery.

Mr. Stephens, the Vice President of the Confederate States, alluding to slavery, expressly says:—"This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and the present revolution." Speaking to Southern men and slaveholders, he had no hesitation in stating the true cause of the rupture. He knew what it was; and he knew that they knew it.

The *Richmond Examiner*, in a recent article discussing the idea of a forced conscription of slaves for purposes of labor, holds the following language: "As the war originated and is carried on in great part for the defense of the slaveholder in his property, rights, and the perpetuation of the institution, he ought to be first and foremost in aiding, by every means in his power, the triumph and success of our arms. The slaveholder ought to remember, that for every negro he thus furnishes, he puts a soldier in the ranks." The Southern people understand such logic. Well did the *New York Observer*, quoting the above confession, add the following withering comment:—"In the annals of human crime, dark and bloody as they are, we note no avowal more unblushing and barbarous, none that so utterly ignores the character and obligations of Christian civilization and common humanity, none that so stamps a war with all the attributes of sin and shame to be borne in ages of history by those who begun and carried it on for such a purpose."

We do not then mis-state the facts of the case, or misrepresent the men, when we trace this war to slavery. Slavery began the war, and slavery is now pursuing it. It is the slaveholders' rebellion, plotted by conspirators ambitious for control, and using this institution as the means of gaining their end. But for slavery there would have been no rebellion. The fault is not in the

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North, but in the South. The discussions of the subject by Northern men, their earnest and manly protest against the extension of slavery, their unwillingness to have the policy of slavery rule the land, even the severe denunciations used by the most extreme Abolitionists,—these and the like facts are in no just and proper sense the cause of this war. The real cause lies in the men who began it, in the purposes and motives which draw their life from the institution of slavery. And now all the people, North and South, are suffering the dire calamities of war on account of this evil. Long ago we ought to have met the question like statesmen, freemen, and Christians; but we did not, deeming it better to patch up momentary compromises, which, as the sequel has sadly proved, did not cure the evil, or avert the real danger. This has been our mistake and our folly; since the passage of the ordinance of 1787, the nation seems to have forgotten that slavery is a great moral wrong; it has bargained and bartered over this evil; and for this we are now feeling the chastening rod of God. I would not pray for war as a means of grace; yet when it comes, I think it well to trace its moral connections, to repent of the sin which has occasioned it, to be instructed by it, to listen to the voice of God in it, to remember that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, and gratefully accept the blessing which, through such a tremendous affliction, he designs to convey. We ought thoroughly to wash our hands from all complicity with this evil, and do what we can to remove it from the land. If slavery be the evil for which God is chastening us, then his Providence points us to freedom as the moral remedy. We shall be wise to look in the direction of the evil. There the finger of Providence points; and we may be sure that we can make no false issue with Providence.

So also our defeats and delays, while seeming to be disasters, were perhaps necessary as a suitable moral discipline. The public mind, twelve months ago, was not in a right posture to turn victory to the ends of righteousness. The nation had not suffered enough, or thought enough upon the momentous questions of this age, to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God. We have been slowly learning, as I trust we shall continue to learn, that if we wish to preserve our nationality and transmit to our

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children a solid and enduring peace, we must rid ourselves of that which is the great cause of our present troubles. "Peace," says Napoleon, writing from Germany to his brother Joseph who was anxious for peace, "is a word that means nothing. It is the *conditions* of peace that are all." If duly humbled and penitent, we at length make peace on the right conditions, the historian in after-ages, when writing up the events of this hour, free from the passions and excitements of the existing struggle, will point to a people chastened and disciplined by the God of providence, that purity and justice might become the laws of their national life. I am anxious for peace, but I am more anxious in respect to the *principles* involved in that peace. I want the Constitution *as it is*, in the letter and spirit of its true meaning, to be the basis of peace. Nothing is clearer than that we can have no safe and honorable peace that we do not ourselves dictate: there is somewhere an Austerlitz between us and the peace we are seeking; and hoping that we shall find it in due season, I accept the chastisement and discipline, the taxation and disappointment of our delays, not as pure and unmixed evils, but as providentially connected with our highest future good. I am not a prophet; yet if I were to make a guess into the future, I should be inclined to take this view. At any rate, it is to me a bow of promise, and hence of cheerful hope. I think I see God behind this scene, "setting in array the forces of thought and principle," and preparing a nation for his own glory. I think I see a providential and moral strategy behind "all the outward equipage and muniments of visible war," that in final results will be more beneficent than the mere victory of arms. Providence will win in this terrible contest, and posterity rejoice.

I NAME, FOURTHLY, THE PRESENT PROSPECT THAT PROVIDENCE MEANS TO ELIMINATE THE INSTITUTION OF SLAVERY FROM OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM.—I have recently taken some pains to inform myself in respect to the history of the Slave-Power in this country; and I declare to you, that the investigation has greatly increased my desire that this Power might come to an end.

By the Slave-Power I mean mainly the social and political influence of the *large* slaveholders, especially those of the Calhoun school, now numbering perhaps not more than one hun-

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dred thousand persons in a population of more than thirty millions. This Power once comparatively insignificant, is actuated by a class of ideas and interests, that not only unify its purposes, but instinctively inspire it with the claim of ascendency. It is a solid and compact power. Yielding to the economic necessities which arise from the exhaustion of the soil by slave-culture, it wants territory for expansion. Moved by the habits of feeling which are inherent in its very nature, it wants Slave-States added to the Union, as the means of maintaining its political control. Like all oligarchies, it is anxious to secure governmental power. Its history in this country has been one of constant aggression and advancement, especially within the last thirty years. It forms the landed aristocracy of the South, rules in the politics and social ideas of the Southern people, and for a long period, strange as it may seem, has held almost an absolute mastery over the Federal Government. By reason of the staples which it produces, and the market it furnishes for Northern trade, it has identified with itself the selfish interests of commerce. Through the medium of the inter-State slave trade, the statistics of which are shocking to the feelings of humanity, it has firmly united the Border Slave States and the Cotton States in a common policy. Slavery would not be profitable in the former but for the domestic slave trade. For years Virginia has pursued the infamous business of *raising* slaves to supply the more Southern market. Though this has been to her a great source of revenue, every right-minded man must look upon the whole thing with the most perfect disgust and abhorrence.

To please and conciliate the slave interest, particularly in South Carolina and Georgia, the former of which States has been a hot-bed of treason during nearly the whole history of the Government, the framers of the Constitution reluctantly gave their consent to the continuance of the foreign slave trade for a period of twenty years,—a trade now declared to be piracy punishable with death. It doubtless seemed to them wise as a compromise to settle the vexed question, and bring these States into the Union:—yet, alas! the bitter experience of this country has fully shown, that all efforts to satisfy the spirit of slavery by concessions, only increase and intensify its demands. No student of

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our political history can fail to see this truth. It would have been far better, if the Fathers fresh from the Revolution, and breathing the warm inspirations of freedom, had stood firmly to its principles, even if the formation of the Union had been delayed for a time.

The territorial expansion of slavery under the lead of the Slave-Power, since the adoption of the Constitution, is a most alarming fact. Kentucky in 1792, Tennessee in 1796, Mississippi in 1817, and Alabama in 1819, came into the Union as Slave States, being formed out of our original territory, thus enlarging the domain of slavery, and increasing the political strength of the Slave-Power. In 1803, the Government purchased of France the territory of Louisiana, paying for it $15,000,000; and in 1819, it bought Florida of Spain, paying $5,000,000. Out of this territory Slave States were formed and admitted in the Union:—Louisiana, in 1812:—Arkansas, in 1836:—and Florida, in 1845.

During the Congress of 1819 and '20, occurred the memorable contest in respect to Missouri, another Slave State, formed out of the Louisiana purchase. At this time, the Free States became thoroughly alarmed at the dangerous progress of slavery; yet the Slave-Power, true to its instincts, insisted that Missouri should come in as a Slave State, threatening to dissolve the Union if its demands were not granted; and after a severe struggle, freedom yielded, and slavery triumphed. Thus we have eight Slave States added, four out of original territory, and four out of acquired, swelling the tide of this strange Power.

But this is not enough. Mexico, of which Texas was a part, having achieved her independence, abolished slavery in 1829. Almost immediately the Slave-Power cast its eager eye upon Texas as a territorial prize too valuable to be lost. The first plan was to purchase Texas of Mexico; and when this failed, came the effort to get possession of the country, first, by emigration, and then by revolution. Citizens of the United States wrested Texas from Mexico, and devoted it to the extension of slavery. This point being gained, the next thing was to annex Texas to this country; and this was surreptitiously accomplished by a joint resolution of both Houses of Congress in 1845, with a stipulation for dividing it, if necessary, into five States. Here

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is another State that may be divided into several others, added to the Slave-Power.

But again this is not enough. Soon we are involved in the Mexican war, resulting in another large acquisition of territory. The Slave-Power meant to have California and New Mexico; but being disappointed by the unexpected rush of free emigration into the former, it resisted the admission of California as a Free State; and this led to the celebrated compromises of 1850, then proclaimed to be a final settlement of the question of slavery.

The question, however, did not stay settled. In 1854 it was opened again by the repeal of the Missouri-compromise for the express purpose of providing for the introduction of slavery into Kansas; and following this we have the tremendous struggle of the slave-interest to force a slave-constitution upon an unwilling people, actually compelling them to take up arms in their own defense. Every possible effort was made to keep Kansas as a Free State, out of the Union. You are all familiar with the history.

About this time, this most extraordinary and dangerous Power makes the discovery, that slave-property like any other property, has a right, under the Constitution, to go into the Federal territories and there be protected by national law; and in the famous Dred Scott case, it gained from the Supreme Court an extra-judicial declaration of this doctrine, contrary to all the antecedents of our political history. Carrying this new doctrine into the politics of the South, the prominent leaders of this Power, at the last Presidential election, repudiated Mr. Douglas with his political friends at the North, and nominated a man who has since proved himself a traitor, because Mr. Douglas would not adopt this extreme Southern view in respect to the rights of slavery. When the nation had declared its will in the election of Mr. Lincoln, these same men began the work of secession, and precipitated the country into all the the calamities and horrors of war.

Under the general law, that one's moral instincts will rule his practice, or his practice modify and change his instincts, these men now startle the moral sense of the world with the bold proposition, that slavery is essentially a beneficent system, the nor-

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mal state of negro-life, that for which God made the black man, divine in its sanctions, and that the special mission of the South is to preserve this institution and extend it as far as possible. Politicians, and to a very large extent Southern Christians, have adopted this view. This doctrine was boldly asserted by Mr. Stephens in his speech at Atlanta. The *Richmond Enquirer* goes even farther than this. "Hitherto the defense of slavery," says the *Enquirer*, "has encountered great difficulties, because its apologists (for they were merely apologists) stopped half way. They confined the defense of slavery to *negro*-slavery alone, abandoning the *principle* of slavery, and admitting that every *other* form of slavery was wrong. Now, the line of defense is changed: the South maintains that slavery is just, natural, and necessary, and that it does not depend on the difference of *complexions*." This is admirably consistent, for if negro-slavery is right, then all slavery is right. The question of *color* has nothing to do with the character of the institution. The South are making rapid progress in the wrong direction, claiming that *capital* invested in the ruling class, should own *labor*, and hence govern it by an absolute authority. This is the political and social Paradise, towards which the Southern people are marching.

Though the population of the slave States is, and for a long time has been, much less than that of the Free States, a majority of the Presidents, of Cabinet Ministers, of the members of the Supreme Court, of Army and Navy appointments, have been Southern men, most of them known to be publicly committed to the interests of slavery. Southern men, in number out of all proportion to the population of the Slave States as compared with that of the Free, have filled the places of honor, enjoyed the patronage of the Government, and fixed its policy. Northern men have been compelled to make their obeisance to the Slave-Power, and swear upon its altars, in order to avoid being proscribed by Southern politicians. Let a Northern man be even suspected of not being true to the slave-interest, and he at once lost caste with the South.

Such are some of the facts,—not *all* of them, but merely some of them,—marking the career of the Slave-Power in this country, which truthful history submits to the inspection of a

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candid world. Let me add, that they are just such facts as naturally and necessarily spring from the tendencies and influences of slave-society, when attempting to run the race with that order of civilization which prevails in free society. The two systems are essentially antagonistical. They never were harmonized, and they never can be. The effort to do it in this country, has proved a failure. Between them there is, always has been, and always will be, an "irrepressible conflict." You may proclaim a truce to this conflict by a compromise; but the quarrel will break out again, and keep breaking out till one or the other system reigns with undisputed ascendency. It is not so much in the *men* who are parties to it, as it is in the *principles* and different *ends* by which they are actuated. No political bonds, without incessant strife, can hold together such conflicting elements. Long before modern Abolitionists were known, this conflict was going on; and it will continue till either freedom or slavery dies. It made its appearance in the Federal Convention that drafted the Constitution; and ever since that day nothing has sufficed to heal the difficulty. We have had as good compromisers as the world ever saw; and every one of them has failed of success. Where nature makes a discord, no human power can make a harmony.

It is no just answer to this sketch of the progress and demands of the Slave-Power, to say that the Free States have also increased in number and population. This growth of freedom in the removal of slavery from the Northern States, and in the addition of new Free States, is simply carrying out the principles upon which this Government was founded. Freedom is the natural and proper destiny of the American people, to which they stand committed before God and man; and all progress in this direction is in exact accordance with the very genius of our social and political life. It is not so with slavery. Slavery is a social and political *disease*, hostile to the first principles of Republican democracy; and hence its growth is just so much added to the original difficulty.

Now, in view of the facts thus presented, I sincerely thank God for whatever there is of prospect, that one of the conse-

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quences of this war will be the downfall of the Slave-Power, and of the system on which it rests. It is quite time that such a power should come to an end. It has already ruled too long for the good of the people. In the language of Professor Cairnes, "it forms, as it seems to me, one of the most striking and alarming episodes in modern history." He speaks of it "as the most formidable antagonist to civilized progress which has appeared for many centuries, representing a system of society at once retrograde and aggressive,—a system which containing within it no germs from which improvement can spring, gravitates inevitably towards barbarism, while it is impelled by exigencies inherent in its position and circumstances to a constant extension of its territorial domain." He says:—"From the year 1819 down to the present time, the history of the United States has been one record of aggressions by the Slave-Power, feebly, and almost always unsuccessfully, resisted by the Northern States, and culminating in the present war." Such is the estimate of a profound philosopher, looking at our past and present from the other side of the water. Thank God for the hope, that our future will be different!

The Government released from the predominant influences of slavery, has already done some good things in the right direction; and I trust that it will do more in the same direction. It has abolished slavery in the District of Columbia. It has by law interdicted the existence of this institution in the national territories. It has made a treaty with England, contemplating more vigorous efforts for the suppression of the foreign slave-trade. It has recognized the national character of Liberia and Hayti, and entered into diplomatic relations with these Governments. It has applied its strong arm to the slave-trader, giving all the people practical notice that it means to execute the law against this class of offenders. These are steps in the right direction, showing that the principles of freedom now rule at Washington.

The people of Missouri, too, show by their recent election, that they have caught the inspiration of freedom. A majority of their next Legislature, and at least four of their Representatives in the next Congress, are emancipationists, having been elected on this distinctive principle. Missouri has received an awful

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lesson from this war, and seems inclined to profit by it. Western Virginina will naturally range herself in the same line. In the Border States, slavery has already been so *demoralized*, to use the military phrase, as to lose very much of its value, compactness and strength. The system is shaken and shaking under the tread of contending legions. The war has unsettled its foundations, lessened its profits, and made it insecure. These States will soon find it for their interests, as it is clearly their duty, to detach themselves from this falling and fading system of evil. Every hour that the strife goes on, increases the certainty that this must be the final result.

As I have no doubt, the Federal Government would be very glad to have the rebels lay down their arms; but I see no hope, not even the faintest, that the leaders of this rebellion have the least idea of doing this thing. If you call a Federal Convention to remodel the Constitution, they will be no parties to it. They do not mean to compromise this matter at all. They mean to fight it out. They utterly scout the idea of returning to the Union upon any terms. The *Richmond Examiner*, in a recent article, giving up all hope of intervention by England, remarks:—"We are told to beat the North, or submit. We may do the first of these things; but if we cannot, we never will do the last. Important as it is, this event does not change the position or purpose of the South the breadth of a hair." Those compromisers who are going to settle this difficulty for us, as they say, would do well to remember, that those who constitute the life and soul, the working *brains*, of this rebellion, want no compromise. Steadfastly, with a persistence that in a good cause would deserve our admiration, do they assert that they will never come back into the Union, or consent to a peace not based on Disunion. When Henry May went to Richmond as a kind of volunteer peacemaker, he was distinctly told that if he were to present them a blank sheet of paper, with the full permission to write their own terms of reconciliation, they would utterly reject it. The *Richmond Dispatch*, of Nov. 10th, in an article on "the elections of Yankeedom," says that "the old flag is the most detested of symbols to the whole body of Southern society." It calls the American Eagle a "Yankee buzzard," and declares that "if slavery

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were legalized in every State, the South would never accept the condition for a return to the land of bondage."

It is hence a plain matter of fact,—and we may as well see it first as last,—that we must positively *conquer* the rebels, and *coerce* them into subjection to the Federal authority, as the only possible means of restoring the Union. If we cannot do this, we cannot gain the end; and if this will not gain it, nothing else will. I think we may set our hearts at rest on this point. And in order to this end, it is becoming increasingly obvious every day that if we really mean to conquer the rebels, we must strike at their system of slavery, it being one of their strongholds; and make the slave-population our friends, using them and protecting them as such, as fast as we can reach them. We must cease to regard the people in the rebellious States as *slaves* and *masters*, and simply view them as *enemies* or *friends*.

Instructed by the course of events, and acting upon this theory, the President, who by the Constitution is the "Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy," and to whom is hence intrusted the direction of the military force of the nation in the time of war, has issued his Proclamation of Emancipation as one branch of his *war*-policy, giving the rebels ample time in which to lay down their arms, yet threatening them with its execution, if they persist in resisting the authority of the Government. This measure has been the subject of much careful and anxious thought on the part of the President; and it deserves the careful consideration of the people.

It should be noted in the outset, that this Proclamation is aimed, not at *peaceful* and law-abiding citizens, not at those who are living under the Constitution and recognize its authority, but at *rebellious communities*, including those States and portions of States that are in armed rebellion against the Federal Government. This is the attitude of their State authorities. The whole power of these communities is now wielded for the destruction of the Government. The slaves, irrespective of their own choice, to all intents and purposes form a part of this power, as really as the soldiers in the field. In their present position, they are practically our *enemies*, as truly as their masters.

As to the *utility* of emancipation, considered as a *war*-mea-

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sure, the President surrounded by his Cabinet, is in a better position to judge than any private citizen can possibly be. He has long pondered the question; and however wise we may think ourselves, "on this subject the President must be wiser, or all the rules of probability fail." Of course it offends the rebels; yet they show conclusively by their own action, that they regard it as increasing the difficulties of their position. They are already running off their slaves farther South; and when the Proclamation shall reach the ear of the slave-population, as it most certainly will, it will inspire them with the hope of liberty, make them the friends of the Union, dispose them to escape from their masters, and very likely compel them to withdraw a portion of their forces to guard themselves against this cause of danger. So far as the measure goes, it must act adversely to the rebellion, and favorably to the Union. It must in various ways co-operate with the army. While I am no strategist, I have common sense enough to see this fact. I can readily see, that an army of *invasion* treading the soil of slavery, and fighting on that soil, can and must derive very great advantages from the fact that it is also an army of *emancipation*. The slaves can and will fight for our cause, if we choose thus to use them. Some of them fought in the last war with England; and some of them, in the Revolutionary War. Why we should decline their services, especially when the rebels are using them for war-purposes, is more than I can see.

We have strangely overlooked the fact, that the slave-population forms a prodigious power either *for* or *against* us in this struggle, and that it will be one or the other according as we treat that population. It is indeed a very serious question, whether we can conquer the South at all, if the slaves are *practically* arrayed against us. In 1860, the number of white males between the ages of 18 and 45, was about 4,000,000, for the loyal States, and 1,300,000 for the disloyal States. In the latter of these States you have about 3,500,000 slaves, of whom two millions may be estimated as laborers. From these laborers deduct 300,000 employed in domestic service; and this leaves 1,700,000 plantation hands engaged in tilling the soil and furnishing the productions necessary for the support of the army, and hence actually work-

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ing in the cause of the rebellion. Add this 1,700,000 slaves to the 1,300,000 whites between the ages of 18 and 45, and you have a military and producing force of 3,000,000 in the disloyal States opposed to one of 4,000,000 in the loyal. This makes the struggle, as to the question of numbers, very much nearer one of equality than we have been wont to imagine. Transfer the slave-population to our side: adopt a policy which may and must, to a very considerable extent, accomplish this result; make the negro loyal to the Union rather than to his master: and by the simplest rules of arithmetic, you will so much weaken the rebellion, and strengthen the cause of the Union. Decline this policy; and you are doing the very thing that will best please the rebels, since it leaves the slaves as so many human beings to be employed by them for their own purposes. If this be good sense, I confess that I cannot see it. Are we so prejudiced against black men, that we propose to have our sons, and brothers, and fathers, by the thousands and tens of thousands, killed on the field of battle, rather than have our cause served by black men? This is paying a large penalty for prejudice. The South are guilty of no such folly.

Let it be borne in mind too, that if we mean to withdraw the slaves from the service of the rebels, and enlist them in our behalf, it must be done by the proclamation of freedom. There is no other way to gain the end. They are *persons*—human beings, and not passive things to be taken away by force,—to whom the prospect of *freedom* will be a motive of action. If we repel them, or refuse to make any appeal that can reach them and influence their action, they will remain just where they are, serving their masters, and serving the rebellion, and thus protracting the war for an indefinite period. Their number is so great as to make their position a question of very serious moment.

Some people who are quite apt to see a ghost whenever the word *slavery* is mentioned, think that the President should have *done* this thing, and not *said* it, How can he do it without saying it? *Saying* it is the effective way of doing it. If he wishes to enlist these people in the cause of the Union, he must *tell* them so, and upon what terms; and this is just what he has done

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in the Proclamation. It is for their hearing as well as that of their masters.

Some also are solicitous lest a *servile* insurrection may result from the Proclamation. Of this there is no prospect; and if it should occur, the fault will be wholly with the rebels. An insurrection of *white* men against the rebel-Government we should welcome and foster, as so much gain to the Union cause; and I am not able to see why a needful war-measure to conquer the rebellion should be ommitted, simply because *black* men may possibly take it into their heads to fight for their own liberty. We have tried war on peace principles quite long enough

Some also object because the Proclamation is not distinctively *anti*-slavery. To this I reply, that whatever may be the President's moral convictions, he could not as a military commander, make this a primary feature. His object is to conquer the rebellion and restore the Union: and as a means to this end, he resorts to emancipation in the rebellious States.

Some persons doubt the *constitutionality* of the act, confounding, as I humbly conceive, questions that differ most essentially. Has the President, in the time of *peace*, the civil or administrative right under the Constitution to adopt such a measure? Clearly not. Has he as the "Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy," in the time of *war*, and for the purpose of weakening and destroying the enemy, the right to abolish slavery in the rebel-States? Undoubtedly. He has a right to do anything and everything, not contrary to the usages of civilized warfare, that may be necessary to the end. The Constitution makes him the "Commander-in-Chief;" it puts into his hands the entire military power of the nation; but it does not prescribe to him the *way*, as it plainly could not, in which he shall subdue the enemy. This he must determine for himself in the exercise of his best discretion, subject only to those limitations which are recognized among civilized communities. "No rebel has any right" of either property or life, "a regard to which should weaken or obstruct any military measure needed to subdue the rebellion." For this purpose the "Commander-in-Chief" has as much right to emancipate the slaves in the rebellious States, as he would have to drill a regiment or bombard a city. The one is just as

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constitutional as the other; and both as war-measures, are matters for his discretion. The slaves are a portion of the Southern people. If regarded as the *property* of rebels, the Government has the same right to seize and use them for its own purposes, that it would have to seize and use their horses or any other property. If regarded as *persons*, then the Government has a right to detach them from the interests of the rebellion, to secure their services, and take any measures necessary to these ends.

Such a war-policy in order to be effective, must act upon the rebellious communities as a *whole*. It plainly cannot institute courts of inquiry in these communities, to determine who are rebels and who are not. If there be loyal persons there who suffer from the loss of their slaves in consequence of this measure, this is the misfortune of their position; and they must look to the Government to do them justice afterwards. A great military necessity cannot stop on their account, especially while the Government has no practical evidence that there *are* any such persons. "Individual justice" applicable to such cases, "must wait for calmer times."

But does not the Proclamation undertake to *repeal* the laws of the Slave States now in rebellion? Not at all. It says nothing about those laws. It leaves them where they are, in the statute-book. Under the pressure of a military necessity, it simply removes the slave from under those laws; and so far as it goes into effect, makes him a freed-man. It deals not with the laws, but with the specific person or persons who are held as slaves. In time of war, the military power suspends the action of civil law, upon urgent necessity. It seizes the property of the enemy, and applies it to its own uses. So in this case, the President adopts a policy, by which he hopes to secure and appropriate to the benefit of the Government that which the rebels call *property*, and which they are using with great effect against the Government. In doing this he does not annul or repeal a single law of any Slave State. No such power is assumed. Indeed, if every one of the slaves were actually to gain his freedom, the *laws* themselves in regard to slavery in the rebellious States would still remain, just as the laws in regard to any other kind of property. Suppose, the President could, and should, for mil-

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itary purposes, seize nine-tenths of the *horses* of the rebels, would any man pretend that this is a repeal of State laws in regard to horses? True, the horses under the rights of war would pass into the service of the Government; yet the laws of the State would not be repealed. They would afford no protection, for the time being, against the right of seizure; and this is but the common incident of war, following from the general right to disable an enemy. Suppose, the President selects a policy adapted to take away the *slaves* from the enemy, on the same theory, and under the same rights of war, that would justify him in taking his horses, will any one say that this annuls or repeals the laws of slavery? True, the slaves are gone in this case, and so were the horses in the other; and if both are regarded as property, then the President's right to take either or both, for military purposes, is abundantly recognized by the laws of war. He does not repeal State laws in the one case any more than he does in the other; and in neither does he repeal them.

How will the Courts decide this constitutional question? They will not decide it at all until they reach it; and they certainly will not reach it until the rebellion is subdued. The question is not now in the Courts, and will not be until after the President has done his work. As to what they will then do, we must wait for time to supply the answer. They certainly cannot remand back to the condition of slavery those who have actually acquired their freedom under the Proclamation, any more than they can return to the rebels property which has been seized and confiscated by the Government. The status of freedom being once acquired, is fixed. The slave ceases to be an article of property, and becomes a *man*, whom no existing law can return to bondage. The Courts cannot, either during the war or after it, reverse the *actual* consequences that arise from the Proclamation. If one half, or even the whole of the slave-population become free, then they must remain free. They are no longer the subjects of slave-laws, any more than any other free persons. The Courts must therefore recognize that status in which the Proclamation has actually placed them, and which the President pledges the executive government of the United States to maintain. True, this status grows out of a military act in the first in-

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stance; and so does the seizure and resulting title of any other species of rebel-property grow out of a military act. The Government might, if carrying out the theory of slavery, treat the slaves coming into its possession as property, and sell them, just as it would have the right to hold or sell the horses of rebels; and if so, then it may also give them their freedom, which is the theory of the President's Proclamation.

How far then will the Proclamation be likely to go in the direction of freedom? How much will it actually accomplish in this respect? It will at least be of as much service to the cause of freedom, as it is to that of the Union. Every slave that it takes from the rebels, and places on the side of the Union, it will consecrate to freedom. This we think, may be regarded as a fixed fact. "The slave" says an able writer on this point, "whom we capture as property, is, after his capture and the transfer to himself of all the captured title of his master, no longer a chattel, but a man, insusceptible of recapture, except as a prisoner of war, entitled to all the rights and privileges of such persons." The capture forever extinguishes the master's title, and devotes the slave to freedom. By his own act in escaping from the master, and under the Proclamation making himself an ally of the Union, he does that which is equivalent to a capture. He captures himself, and forever becomes a freeman. The Proclamation as adressed to the masters, furnishes a motive for them to discontinue this wicked rebellion: but if they will not heed it, then it invites the slaves to become our *allies* with the promise of freedom, pledging the Government to "maintain" this freedom, and also to do "no act or acts" to hinder "any efforts they may make for their actual freedom." Already, without any such pledge, thousands of slaves have fled from their masters; and more would have done so, if the policy of the Government had been different. General Butler designated them as *contraband of war*,—persons indeed, yet claimed by their masters as *property*. When the new policy shall go into effect, following in the line of the army, and penetrating into the heart of the rebellious States, these so called *contrabands* will be greatly increased.

The prospect, moreover, is that the leaders of the rebellion, having staked everything upon their own success, will continue

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the fight, till the Southern people are desolated and blasted as perhaps no other people ever were in the history of man. If they persevere as they seem fully determined to do, and the Government shall also persevere as it certainly must, then there will not be much left of slavery at the end of this contest. The war provoked by it, will prove its ruin, sweeping it away in the wake of that general destruction that must overtake Southern society. Its power will be so broken and scattered, that what is left of it, will hardly be worth keeping.

This reasoning goes upon the supposition, that the struggle is to be one of very great severity; and unless the loyal States recede from their present position, and consent to a dismemberment of the nation, of which there is no prospect, then, judging from the temper of the South, we must conclude that just such a struggle is before us. The conditions upon which the contending parties are willing to make peace, are so essentially different, that nothing but the most absolute conquest, on the one side or the other, can ever bring peace. The Government will not yield to the demands of the rebels, and they will not yield to the demands of the Government; and hence the sword must settle the controversy. As I have no doubt, we shall conquer them in the end; but I see no prospect of this result until they feel the extremest desolations of war, carrying away slavery and almost everything else in its train, and placing Southern society on a new basis. This, while breaking down the rebellion, will be very sure to widen the area of freedom. Once relieved from bondage and tasting the sweets of liberty, the slave population cannot be reduced to their former condition. The now ruling class will be compelled to accept this result.

So far then as the Constitution is concerned, we see no just ground of complaint with either the Proclamation itself, or the freedom which, in connection with the war, is likely to grow out of it. If the public mind had not been so long misguided on the slavery-question, the President's policy would have been welcomed with universal acclaim. It is a noticeable fact, that loyal Southern men do not complain of this policy.

Colonel Hamilton says:—"Yes, I accept the President's Proclamation, and I hail it with gratitude and joy."

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Ex-Secretary Holt, of Kentucky, who ought to be very good authority with all loyal people, in a recent letter, thus writes:—"My faith in all this matter is simple and briefly stated. It is this:—*For all things that are for the Union—against all things that are against it.*" "No human institution, no earthly interest, shall ever by me be weighed in the scales against the life of my country." "Is it not childish prattle to say, that the South can claim to be at the same moment the *protege* and the destroyer of the Constitution? Does it not require an audacity absolutely satanic, to insist that the beneficent provisions of that hallowed instrument shall be secured to States and people who are spurning and spitting upon its authority, and who are leading forward vast armies to overwhelm it, and with it the homes and hopes of all who are rallying in its defense?" "War, certainly one like this, in self defense,—is clearly constitutional; but if such a war has its restraints, it has also its rights and duties, prominent among which is the right and duty of weakening the enemy by all possible means, and thus abridging the sanguinary conflict." "The Constitution is the charter of national life, and not of national death." I commend these earnest and patriotic words to those, who fear lest the President's Proclamation may have transcended the Constitution.

It cannot be too strongly impressed upon our minds, that the Government in this war, is dealing with *rebellious communities*,—with "States and people who are spurning and spitting" upon the authority of the Constitution. It is not now a mob overcoming the State authorities. It is an organized rebellion, having all the forms of a political society. The States *as such*, with all the machinery of government, legislative, executive, and judicial, are in rebellion against the United States. The people, whether considered as individuals or political societies, are in the same posture. Practically there is no loyalty in these rebellious States. The loyalty of individuals, however real as a personal sentiment, has no effective being. It amounts to nothing. It at present furnishes no basis on which to build. Such is very clearly the state of the facts; and with these facts as they are, the Government has to deal.

What then becomes of the doctrine of State Rights, as limit-

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ing or restraining the legislative and executive action of the Government against States in rebellion? Are there any such rights known to the Constitution? Has a State any constitutional and legal status, except as a member of the Federal Union? Is it a State at all in the constitutional sense, when the whole machinery of State-Government, and practically the whole body of the people, are not only out of the Union, but actually making war upon it? It surely is in no position to make an appeal to constitutional rights; whatever rights it had, are forfeited by its own acts; and in attempting to conquer such a State and such a people, provided the conquest itself be constitutional, the Government may resort to any and every measure not inconsistent with civilized warfare. The Constitution clearly authorizes the conquest; and the code of war defines the method. The Government may annihilate the State, remodel it, change its boundary-lines, burn down its cities, hang its State officers, place it under martial law, alter its institutions, or do anything else, necessary to conquest, and compatible with the code of war. We have no precedents in our own history as to the method of dealing with such a case; the Constitution furnishes no description of the method; it simply bestows upon Congress the power "to provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, *suppress insurrections*, and repel invasions," making the President the "Commander-in-Chief" of the militia when so called forth; and then leaves the method with the National Congress and the Executive. Their business is to suppress the insurrection by force, doing whatever may be necessary to the end. In doing this they are not bound to consult either the laws or the institutions of a rebellious State. They are not bound to execute those laws. Their work is conquest: this is the *necessity* and *duty* of the hour; and whatever, not repugnant to the laws of civilized nations, will contribute to this end, may be done.

In the commencement of this struggle, the Northern people and the Government also, assuming the existence of a large and powerful element of loyalty in the South, were anxious to treat the rebellious States, so far as possible, as if they were practically *in* the Union, and therefore entitled to the privileges secured by the Constitution. Now, whatever we may say as to the

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*legal* invalidity of secession, as a *matter of fact* these States are *out* of the Union; they are represented in another government, and that government is making war upon the United States. These are the stern facts of the case; and with them we have to deal without any precedent for our guide, except that furnished by the usages of war. The doctrine of State-Rights as existing under the Constitution, does not meet the case. It neither defines the method of conquest, nor that of restoring the Union after the conquest is gained. Those who continue to shout this doctrine, interpreting it as they do in times of peace, have a very beautiful idea; but the misfortune is, that it has no practical application to the matter in hand. What are they pleading for? The State-Rights of *rebellious* States. Are there any such rights known to the Constitution? Especially, are these rights such as to hold back the Government from any measure necessary to subdue the rebellion? If so, we had better abandon the whole theory of *coercion* at once, and let the rebels go. As *traitors* to the sovereign authority, they surely cannot claim the rights of loyal citizens. Viewed in this character, they have the right to be "*constitutionally hung.*" As *belligerents*, they have only the rights incident to war. Hence the plea of State-Rights urged in behalf of *rebellious* States, has no foundation in the Constitution. There is not a sentence in that sacred charter to support the idea. Those who urge it, either misapprehend the facts, or are in sympathy with traitors.

There is another constitutional question, not involved in the President's Proclamation, yet very strongly suggested by the exigencies and revelations of this war. Perhaps the people will have to consider it before we reach the end of the pending struggle. It is this:—Has the Government of the United States,—the occasion imperatively requiring it as a means of self-preservation—the right to abolish slavery in *all* the Slave States? It is a first truth, that every nation has a right to exist, and do whatever may be necessary to secure its own safety; and if it be a fact, as the events of this war seem to show, that the existence and safety of this nation require the removal of slavery, why may it not interpose its power and effect this removal? Why may it not, by law and executive action, confiscate and set free all

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the slaves that belong to *rebels*? This if carried into effect, would at once remove the largest part of the evil. In respect to *loyal* slaveholders, the Government would, according to the Fifth Article of the Amendments to the Constitution, be bound to render a just compensation. Slaves are their private property in law; and if taken from them to secure the public safety, then they would be entitled to compensation. They would thus receive an equivalent for their loss, and hence suffer no wrong. That private property may be taken for the public good, is implied in the very article which requires a "just compensation" when it is taken. Slave-property is no more sacred in the right of tenure against an imperative public necessity, than any other property. If the Government may take the *land* of the master, paying him for it, why may it not also take the *slave* upon the same theory? If the public authority may destroy a building to arrest a conflagration that threatens to burn down a city, why may not the nation destroy that which perils its very life, dealing with traitors by confiscation, and with loyal slaveholders by a "just compensation?"

The whole question, as it seems to me, is mainly one of fact:—Can the nation conquer the rebellion, and restore peace to the land, without removing slavery? If it cannot, then unless the Constitution be a charter of "national death," the legislative sovereignty of the nation must be competent to the removal of slavery. The President's plan of inviting the Slave States to unite with the General Government for this purpose, is good so far as it goes; it may be sufficient; it may be the very best way of reaching the end; yet the progress of events may compel both Government and people to march squarely up to the question of general emancipation throughout *all* the Slave States, adopting the theory of confiscation for rebels, and that of compensation for loyal slave-holders. We have not yet seen the end of this war by any means; nor can we to-day tell, what we shall have to do before we reach the end. I am strongly inclined to think, that a general breaking up of the whole slave-system, in connection with the war, as a part of its history, and as a measure of war, will be found the shortest and surest road to the end. I do not see much prospect of final victory, and none of perma-

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nent peace, without this result. Clear am I that the great political and moral benefit of this appalling struggle will be lost, unless we rid the land of slavery. I go for the Union even with slavery, though not *because* of it; and I certainly go for it without slavery. I am for maintaining the integrity of the Union without any conditions; I believe in *unconditional* loyalty; yet it does seem to me, that one great purpose of Providence in this war is to blast and destroy the system of slavery, by delivering the rebels over to a most infuriated madness on the one hand, and on the other, compelling the loyal people, by the actual necessities of their position, to apply their hand to the work. We shall have to do more than simply say:—"Let slavery die, if necessary to save the Union." We shall have to say:—"Let slavery die."

Greatly, very greatly, should I have preferred the gradual removal of this evil without the terrible ordeal of war, believing this to be best for all classes; but if this institution shall now perish, or so far perish that its final death will be near at hand, under the terrible arbitrations of war, it will not be the first instance in the history of the world in which the sword has accomplished a like result. It seems to be the order of Providence that slavery shall at length die, *peaceably* if it will, *violently* if it decline the peaceful method. And if a sovereign and righteous Providence shall appoint this result, and thus purify our political system, as one of the effects of this war, I shall thank God for it. It will, in my judgment, be the beginning of brighter hopes and better days in this land. I do not rejoice in the war, or in the afflictions and sufferings of the people, or in the madness of the rebels; but if this be providentially the painful birth of liberty to all the people, then in the *result* gained I do most devoutly rejoice, and that too, not merely for the sake of the black man, but equally for the sake of the white man. The blessing will fall on both. In every point of light, slavery is a great curse to both. While it degrades and oppresses the victim, it demoralizes the ruling class. It generates its own peculiar vices; makes the South poor; impoverishes the land; limits the modes of industry; places the ban of dishonor upon labor, and justly exposes the

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nation to the reproach of the civilized world. Such a system ought to die; it ought not to be anywhere, especially in this land of professed liberty; and sincerely do I bless God for whatever there is of prospect, that its dying day is near at hand. Before this war began it seemed strong, proud, and defiant; the philanthropist could see nothing indicating its early downfall; the moral remonstrance of Christian argument and appeal scarcely reached its ear; the Northern people had no idea of politically interfering with it as a *local* institution of the Slave States; they were willing to abide by the compromises, and pledges of the Constitution: yet now, contrary to the designs and expectations of the rebels, this odious system has received, and is receiving, such severe and heavy blows as to form a reasonable prophecy of approaching death.

I NAME, FINALLY, THE GLORIOUS PROSPECTS OF THIS NATION IN THE FUTURE, IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS CONTEST.—Everything depends on the question of victory. If we fail, the nation is dismembered, and the country politically ruined. If we get discouraged, and stop mid-way in the effort, we shall have rolled up an enormous public debt and sacrificed thousands of lives for no purpose. If we are defeated, the South will be triumphant, coming out of the struggle with the advantages, prestige, and imperious bearing of victory, and withal claiming the victor's right to dictate the terms upon which peace shall be made. We shall then have at least two nations on this Continent, so diverse in their policy, and naturally so hostile, that all hopes of permanent peace will be at an end. We shall have, in immediate contact with us, a great slave-empire, flushed with victory, ambitious to extend its dominion far and wide, determined to make itself a great military power, and amply proving its capacity to do this by having triumphed over the armies of the Union. We should be constantly quarreling with such a neighbour. A precedent, moreover, would be established in favor of secession, that would open the way for other revolutions. The Western States, now so loyal, would be very likely to set up for themselves, or drawn by the attraction of their own interests, at length affiliate with the Southern Confederacy. The Southern people would then become the ruling people, and if

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inspired by their present instincts, spread the institution of slavery over a large portion of this Continent. They would be a fighting people. Mexico would fall into their hands. The Pacific States would go with them, or detaching themselves from us, form an independent nationality. Our position among the nations of the earth would be entirely altered. We should no longer be the Great Republic. We should be the prey of our mutual animosities, and also of the intrigues and selfish designs of despots in the old world, having but little security at home, and less credit abroad. Our commerce would languish, and our rapidly growing cities sink into decay. Thus disintegrated, we should either repudiate our public debt, or be crushed to the earth under its weight. Such is the disheartening and even appalling picture set before us, if we fail. Let those, if any there be, who are willing to relinquish the struggle on account of its present sacrifices, and yield to the demands of the South, duly count the cost of the failure. Let those who prophesy failure, and seem half-willing to have events confirm the truth of the prophecy, estimate, if they can, the length and breadth, the height and depth of the disaster involved in the meaning of this word. Individual men die, and their places are speedily filled by others; but when a nation like that of the United States shall perish, proving the greatness and glory of its life in a short career, and also by its death proving its incapacity for permanent life, where, on what shores, by the agency of what men, shall the like be ever again reproduced? If the Republican principle committed to our hands, cannot stand the test of time, and triumph over rebellion,—if more than twenty millions of people cannot conquer eight millions, half of whom are slaves, and will be our friends if we have the wisdom to make them such,—if with all our advantages we have not manhood, and energy, and endurance enough for this purpose,—if this be so, then I have greatly mistaken the character of the Northern people. I shall believe such a disgraceful fact when I see it, and not till then. We may be less excitable and mercurial than the South, and hence may not move quite as rapidly; yet the sober, solid, patriotic sense of the Northern mind never will, and never can settle down upon the doctrine of failure. We cannot afford to fail.

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If, on the other hand, we win and establish a righteous peace, then no other nation on earth has before it such a brilliant future. I am quite aware that it will take time and a great amount of wisdom to reconstruct the Union after victory is gained; and moreover, at present, certainly until we better know precisely what the difficulties are, we cannot fix upon any specific programme of measures. We must deal with the case as it presents itself. If we can conquer the rebels, we can find the ways and means of managing them afterwards. The conquest will break up their armies, exhaust their power, destroy the influence of their leaders, place them in the hands of the Federal Government, and compel them to accept such terms as the Government may choose to dictate. If the system of slavery shall be overthrown, the present ruling class will lose their power; the non-slaveholding whites, numerically the largest portion of the people, will acquire a new importance in the general economy of Southern life; and very likely there will be a large emigration of Northern free labor into the Southern States. Military subjection, undoubtedly necessary in the first instance, will gradually do its work, and give place to a different order of things. New ideas, new men, new institutions, and new modes of industry will take possession of the South. Southern society will itself be *reconstructed*, and enter upon a new style of life; and this, as I fondly believe, will, in due season, bring about the reconstruction of the Union. All political societies, however violent their passions for the moment, at last yield to their interests and their necessities; this is their history, and I do not anticipate that the South either will or can be an exception to this rule. Conquer them: hold possession of their ports of entry: command their rivers with your gunboats: release the masses of the common people from a despotism that now overhangs them like a cloud of death: break down the Slave-Power: show to the non-slaveholding whites, that their interests lie with the Union, and the principles of a free democracy, rather than with an aristocracy of landlords: send into the South a powerful current of Northern emigration: give to the millions of slaves, nearly half of the whole population, a chance to do something for their humanity; and at no distant period,

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a reconstructed Union will be the result, resting, as I believe, on a much firmer basis than ever before. I believe this the shortest and surest way to the end.

This point being gained, or in a good way of being gained, we then enter upon a *new* career as a nation. We shall have demonstrated to ourselves, and to all the world, the *reality* of our national life, proving that we are, and are to be, *one* people, from the Canadas to the Gulf of Mexico, and so proving it that no earthly power will be likely again to call it in question. We shall have demonstrated our capacity to conquer the greatest rebellion known in the history of man, and thus shown that Republican self-government stretching over the length and breadth of a Continent, is no failure. In the very process of doing this, we shall have acquired those elements of character, those habits of mind, that military experience, and those military preparations, which secure respect among the nations of the earth. It will be well understood that we are a *strong* people, and that no nation can expect to trespass upon our rights with impunity. We shall at once be a first class nation, whose ability to defend its rights will protect it against injury. England, whose policy towards this country, during this contest, has been unnatural, unkind, and ineffably mean, will learn, possibly by a dear bought experience, that this Western Republic is not going to die, either to gratify the jealousy and hatred, or fulfill the evil prophecies, of a self-conceited and heartless aristocracy. Our success will speedily and wonderfully improve the national manners of England. Like most other nations, she respects power; and she will find power here to respect. The theory so common among despots, that a Republican Government resting upon the broad shoulders of the people, cannot be a great military and naval power, will, by our success, receive a most signal rebuke. We shall prove the error by the demonstration of fact.

We shall also have settled the long standing quarrel on this Continent between freedom and slavery, superseding the necessity for compromises, restoring our national life to its normal condition, removing, as I hope, the apple of discord from the land, making ourselves politically a homogeneous people, and proving

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by the practical test of *war*, as we have already done by that of *peace*, that society organized on the basis of free labor, is vastly superior to one organized on the opposite basis. This single result if gained, will be politically, socially, economically, and morally, a very large compensation for the cost and sacrifices incident to this war. Ever since the Union was formed, we have been drifting towards the present crisis; in other days wise and good men have seen it and feared it, and done what they could to avoid it: during the administration of General Jackson the heavens gathered blackness over our heads; and and but for his great promptitude, we should then have been involved in a civil war. Ever since that day, the current has been setting in the direction of a rupture between the North and South; Southern policy, under the management of the Slave Power, has been steadily advancing in its demands: the North has from time to time yielded to these demands: at length the rupture has come: the crisis is upon us; and if we can now settle the questions which have led to this crisis, and which we must settle in order to avoid a like one in the future, we shall have done a work as important as any ever committed to any generation of men. In this aspect of the case we are living in a glorious age.

Laying down the sword under these auspices, and resuming the peaceful industries of life, we shall, in a comparatively short time, repair the damages of the mighty struggle, and spread ourselves out in a career of agricultural, mechanical, and commercial activity, that must make us the great nation of the future. We are the right kind of people to do this work. We have a territory, whose vast amplitude and natural wealth furnish the *physical* conditions of success. Our religion has a tendency to elevate and energize the public character, filling the intellect with the inspiration of great ideas, and moving the heart with the most sacred impulses of feeling. Our duplicate system of Government, Federal and State,—the one national, and the other local,—is eminently suited to extend its broad banner over a whole Continent. Like the solar system, it has a central sun with revolving planets, whose smaller movements lie within the comprehensive orbit of the nation's life. Our growth of population, rising in three-quarters of a century from three millions

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to more than thirty, will, at this rate, in another equal period, present the spectacle of a people, not only numerically greater than any nation in Europe, but nearly equal to the present population of all the European nations put together. Most of these nations grow very slowly; some of them, not at all; whereas we, a young and thrifty people, have scarcely passed the gristle of this process. England is about as much of a *man* as she is likely to be for a long time to come. She has not, and she cannot have, the elements of growth which exist in the greatest abundance here. She does not to-day feed her own population; and but for her commerce, England would soon starve. We can live without England very much better than she can live without us. She wants our breadstuffs quite as much as our cotton.

Let us then go on under the well tested principle of *E Pluribus Unum;* let all parts recognize one, and but one Political Centre; let us be content to be *American* citizens; let us now save ourselves from being denationalized and disintegrated into hostile fragments; let us explode the barbarous dream of a slave-empire; let us make the institutions of liberty the universal breath and soul of our national life; let us as a great and growing people, go forth to the work of existence in the fear and worship of the true God, building our churches at home, and sending the light of Christian truth to the ends of the earth:—let us do these things, and our future will be immeasurably more glorious than our past. Let us fail, and we shall prove ourselves a people unfit to command a great destiny. When I think of this future as it will be, if we now triumph, in contrast with what it must be if we fail, all the feelings of my heart are kindled into a flame of patriotic, and I hope, Christian ardor. Fail! Speak that word in the ear of dotards and cowards. It has no place in my vocabulary. We *must* succeed. Success is our *duty*. The God of order and law as well as of liberty and justice, *commands* us to succeed. Unborn generations are waiting to reap the blessings of our success. Trusting in God, and in our own right arms, succeed we *can*, and succeed we *will*. If the rebels are in earnest, we will be in earnest. This, in a word, is my doctrine for the American people:—REBELLION SHALL SUBMIT TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, OR ITS AGENTS SHALL PERISH BY THE SWORD.

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I have thus, my brethren, opened my whole heart to you on this subject. I might have discussed other themes; a Thanksgiving service is very suggestive; yet I have felt that at this time it was due to you, and due to the God of truth, to consider those subjects to which the finger of Providence is pointing. In the war which is upon us, and from which we so deeply suffer, I have sought to find some things to comfort and cheer the patriot and the Christian. The points to which I have referred, furnish to me the great relief of thought as I ponder upon this present scene of blood. But for them I should look upon the scene with unmingled detestation and horror. War is indeed a most dreadful work. There is a awful wrong *somewhere*. In most cases both of the belligerents are guilty before God. In this case, however, I have no hesitation in saying, that the *wrong*, thes *in*, the *guilt*, and the unparalleled *criminality*, belong wholly to the rebels. They began the war without provocation, without excuse, and for a purpose as wicked as any that ever actuated the human heart. They have imposed upon the nation the absolute necessity of *fighting*, as the only means of escaping its own death. In these circumstances, I say frankly that my voice is for war, persistent, energetic, unrelenting, until this rebellion is entirely subdued. As between war and national death, I choose the former, deeming it on the score of consequences the least of two evils, and in its *moral* relations, an obvious duty. Consoled and comforted by the considerations which have been adduced in this sermon, I exhort you to stand firmly in your places, to entertain no idea of defeat, to accept of no inglorious compromise, and steadily, with an unflinching heroism, pursue the struggle, till victory and peace shall gladden the land, and bless the world. May a gracious Providence be propitious, while a loyal people leaning upon his arm, and invoking his favor, perform the duties which belong to the crisis and the hour! May the God of justice and order, purity and peace, re-establish harmony in our borders, by his wonderful providence causing the wrath of man to praise him! May the principles of liberty, based on the inalienable *Rights* of man, and deeply rooted in the soil of the public conscience, become the blessing and the comfort of *all* the people!

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